



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, SUBDIVISION AND GRADING PERMIT Geotechnical Study Requirements

CITY OF SAN DIEGO DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
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INFORMATION
BULLETIN
515
SEPTEMBER 2001

This information bulletin describes the submittal requirements for geotechnical and geological reports that may be required for development permits, subdivision approvals or grading permits. Geotechnical report requirements for building permits are contained in Land Development Code Section 145.0203, Table 145-02.

Geologic conditions exist within the City of San Diego which can pose serious problems when land is developed. Unstable slopes, slide-prone geologic formations, faults and liquefaction-prone soils occur in many parts of the City. These conditions are mapped as part of the city San Diego Seismic Safety Study (SSS), which indicate where adverse geological conditions exist. These geologic conditions will require some level of evaluation by a geologist, an engineer, or both. Correction of these conditions may often require unintended environmental impacts which must be addressed during the development permit phase of the project. The Geologic Hazard Category is identified on the SSS maps and is provided on the Parcel Information Checklist (DS-302).

I. REQUIRED GEOTECHNICAL STUDY

Table 515A describes which type of geotechnical study is required based upon the geologic hazard category as identified on the San Diego Seismic Safety Study (SSS) and the Land Use Group (see Table 515B). The study identified in Table 515A is required at project submittal unless a written request for exception is provided. Such request must identify the criteria under which the exception is justified per the "Exceptions to Study Requirements" listed below.

II. EXCEPTIONS TO STUDY REQUIREMENTS

The report requirements for development permits may be waived under any of the following conditions. Exceptions are not allowed for Tentative Maps, Subdivision Approvals or Grading Permits.

A. In zones 53 or 54 - where the topography is flat (slope angle less than 3:1 or 18 degrees), where no Environmentally Sensitive Lands (as defined by Land Development Code Section 113.0103) will be impacted, or where no habitable space is proposed.

B. In zones 31 or 32, considered at high risk for liquefaction, the study can be deferred to the Building Development Review (BDR) Division during the construction permit phase if no Environmentally Sensitive

Lands are likely to be impacted, or where no habitable space is proposed.

C. In zones 12 or 13 - Studies for potentially active faults may also be deferred to the Building Development Review (BDR) Division during the construction permit phase where no habitable space is proposed.

D. In zones 32, 48 and 51-55 - Residential additions up to 500 square feet may not require a geotechnical study at the time of submittal. The determination for a geotechnical study will be made during the first review. To determine if a report will be required prior to project submittal, you may request a preliminary review, see Information Bulletin 113, Preliminary Review, for information on the preliminary review process.

III. REPORT CONTENT

The descriptions of the required reports are found in the City's "Technical Guidelines for Geotechnical Reports, available at the Publications Counter in the Development Services Center. The technical guidelines are divided into six parts to distinguish report content for different project types and topographic areas to be developed by grading. Due to particular site conditions, proposed improvements or the policies of testing firms or project consultants, some of these items may be included in subsequent reports on the same project with the conditions of approval of the Development Services Department. Brief descriptions of the three report types required at project submittal appear below:

Part I Technical Guidelines for Preliminary Soil Reports - This is the simplest type of Geotechnical Report. It is the report that is presently referred to in Chapter 4, Article 7 of the State Subdivision Map Act and Section 62 of the San Diego Municipal Code. It will be signed by a Registered Civil Engineer (R.C.E.), who does a majority of his or her work in soil engineering, or a Geotechnical Engineer (G.E.).

Part II Technical Guidelines for Geologic Reconnaissance Reports - This report will be signed by a Certified Engineer Geologist (C.E.G.).

Part III Technical Guidelines for Geologic Investigation Reports (also called Geotechnical Investigation Reports or Geologic Hazard Investigation Reports) - This report will be signed by both a C.E.G. and a G.E. or R.C.E.

Printed on recycled paper. This information is available in alternative formats for persons with disabilities.

To request this document in alternative format, call (619) 446-5446 or (800) 735-2929 (TT).

Be sure to see us on the WorldWide Web at www.sandiego.gov/development-services

DS-5515 (9-01)

Table 515A/Required Geotechnical Study

Hazard Category	Group I	Group II	Group III	Group IV	Group V	Group VI
11, 13, 21, 31, 41	GI	GI	GI	GI	GI	GI
12, 22-27, 42-47	GR	GI	GR	GI	GR	GR
32, 48, (53 & 54 if in hilly terrain)	GR	SR & GR	GR	GR	--	--
51, 52, 55, (53 & 54 if flat terrain)	GR	SR	--	--	--	--

GI = Geologic Investigation

GR = Geologic Reconnaissance

SR = Preliminary Soils Report

Table 515B/Project Approval Group

Group I: Tentative and Vesting Tentative Maps, Subdivision Maps, Lot Splits

Group II: Grading Permits

Group III: Neighborhood or Site Development Permits for Environmentally Sensitive Lands and Coastal Development Permits

Group IV: Planned Development Permits

Group V: Conditional Use Permits

Group VI: Map Waivers